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John Allen Chalk

3-4-1963

To: B.C. Goodpasture (3/4/63) - article enclosed

John Allen Chalk

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THE PECULIAR INSTITUTION

Historians have long labeled slavery as "the peculiar institution." So distinct and well-defined was that system of servitude in this country during the post-Civil War

March 4, 1963
Mr. B. C. Goodpasture, Justification for such a designation.
Gospel Advocate
1113 8th Avenue, South have seen the development of another
Nashville, Tennessee "peculiar institution" within the brotherhood. This "insti-
Dear Brother Goodpasture:

tution" is as distinct and well-defined as ever slavery was

I have enclosed an article that may help some of the Brethren understand the basis for much of the confusion in the brotherhood today about the church building.

"institution" to slavery except that it has been developed

You have my permission to use this in the Advocate if you see fit. We send our deepest wishes for your continued health and well being.

earlier years. This "institution" according to some of our brethren is the "church building."

Fraternally yours,

Certain assumptions constitute the foundation for the "peculiar institution." First, that the New Testament Church

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these "buildings" in definite and limited ways. Third, that the New Testament Church had specific instructions from heaven that "worship" was the only acceptable activity that could be conducted in the "building." Fourth, that the Church of the Bible could use the "building" for divinely ordained worship functions except for restrooms, hat and coat racks, drinking fountains, preacher's office, printing equipment, and other such subjectively deduced items.

This attitude toward the church building is founded on the Scriptural understanding that the Church is not a physical building but a spiritual understanding also ends

THE PECULIAR INSTITUTION

here. Great efforts are expended to demonstrate the building's distinctiveness. It has become a "peculiar institution." Historians have long labeled slavery as "the peculiar institution." So distinct and well-defined was that system of servitude in this country during the post-Civil War days that one can see justification for such a designation. The Church is respected as Christ's Body and the church building as a holy place designed for certain (various) purposes. The last few years have seen the development of another "peculiar institution" within the brotherhood. This "institution" is as distinct and well-defined as ever slavery was in the Old South. We do not propose to liken this new "institution" to slavery except that it has been developed under the same burden of necessity as was slavery in the earlier years. This "institution" according to some of our brethren is the "church building."

John Allen Chalk

Certain assumptions constitute the foundation for the "peculiar institution." First, that the New Testament Church had "buildings." Second, that the New Testament Church used these "buildings" in definite and limited ways. Third, that the New Testament Church had specific instructions from heaven that "worship" was the only acceptable activity that could be conducted in the "building." Fourth, that the Church of the Bible could use the "building" for divinely ordained worship functions except for restrooms, hat and coat racks, drinking fountains, preacher's office, printing equipment, and other such subjectively deduced items.

This attitude toward the church building is founded on the Scriptural understanding that the Church is not a physical building but Scriptural understanding also ends

here. Great efforts are expended to demonstrate the building's distinctiveness. It has become a "peculiar institution." To many the Lord's Body and the church building are viewed with the same degree of reverence, respect, and idolatry. The Church is respected as Christ's Body and the church building as a holy place designed for certain (varying from one advocate and one locality to another) divine functions.

Mr. B. C. Goodpasture
Gospel Advocate
1113 8th Avenue, South
Nashville, Tennessee

Dear Brother Goodpasture:

Brethren, we have established a second institution. Brethren understand the basis for much of the confusion. It is completely disassociated from the Church. It has an identity often recognized and respected more than the Church. If you see fit. We send our deepest wishes for your continued health and happiness.

It is a "peculiar institution" - the church building.

Fraternally yours,

John Allen Chalk

John Allen Chalk

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